



News From Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis 32nd Congressional District of California

1725 Longworth HOB | Washington, DC 20515 – 202.225.5464 -- 202.225.5467 f.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 15, 2005

Contact: Edith Robles
(202) 225-2167

SOLIS JOINS BIPARTISAN COLLEAGUES TO REAUTHORIZE THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Domestic Violence is the number one public health issue facing women and children in the U.S. today.

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis (CA-32), Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, joined Congressman Mark Green (WI-8) in introducing a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), along with 15 other Members of Congress (H.R. 2876). Congresswoman Solis successfully included two key domestic violence provisions for minority communities.

The VAWA reauthorization bill includes two key provisions introduced by Congresswoman Solis to combat domestic violence through educational campaigns in multiple languages and domestic violence courts. The specialized courts would expedite the processing time of domestic violence cases, decrease the backlog of cases and raise the conviction rate. Both provisions were previously introduced by Congresswoman Solis as legislation- the Multi-Cultural Domestic Violence Prevention Act and the Domestic Violence Courts Assistance Act. Congresswoman Solis has been actively involved in advancing domestic violence legislation throughout her career.

"Domestic violence has many forms — physical, emotional and sexual. I am proud to join Congressman Green and others in introducing this bipartisan bill which would make significant strides in addressing unique problems and factors associated with domestic violence, such as culture, race and ethnicity. I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation to improve the lives of victims of domestic violence," said Congresswoman Solis.

A landmark law for women's rights, VAWA provides federal funding and protections for the prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault. VAWA also includes critical provisions for improvements in law enforcement and judicial response to violence against women. First signed into law by President Clinton in 1994, the legislation will expire if Congress does not reauthorize it by September of 2005.

Nearly one-third of all women in the United States will report being abused at some point in their lives. Minority women are less likely to report instances of domestic violence for various reasons, either because of lack of access to adequate domestic violence services, instilled cultural beliefs, language barriers, and lack of health insurance or for fear of being reported to the immigration authorities. More than 90% of American women place domestic and sexual violence as one of their top concerns.

The bill was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and Committees on Education and the Workforce, Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker.

###